

SAILOR'S SNUG HARBOR TO BE DEMOLISHED

Duxbury Clipper, Thursday, December 26, 1974



Sailors' Snug Harbor. Founded at the height of the Clipper Ship era, May 20, 1852 in Boston, this home for retired Mariners is situated on Powder Point overlooking Duxbury Bay.

The Powder Point Realty Trust will demolish the Old Sailors Home (Sailors Snug Harbor) on King Caesar Rd., according to Alexander Stohn Jr. and Kenneth Safe Jr., 2 of the 8 trustees of Powder Point Realty Trust.

Stohn and Safe gave the **Clipper** the following statement:

"This letter is written to inform the people of Duxbury of the intention of the Powder Point Realty Trust to demolish the building known as the Old Sailor's Home.

"The building is a cherished landmark in the town, and we didn't take this step lightly. We have tried for almost one year to find a way to preserve the building because of its unique character.

"We discussed with the town its use as a school and as a town hall; we have explored nursing homes and retirement homes as well as business and professional use.

"In all cases the cost of rehabilitating the present structure was too great or the end use undesirable.

"Therefore, the trustees are left with no choice but to remove the present structure."

Public Spirited Group

The Powder Point Realty Company was formed by a group of Duxbury residents to buy Sailor's Snug Harbor for the purpose of establishing guidelines for, and controlling the usage of, the property in the best interests of the abutters, Powder Point residents and the town. There was special emphasis on the ecological effects of any usage to adjacent areas. In this regard high density population buildings (such as condominiums or apartments), commercial usage of the property such as office buildings, a motel, or hotel, or use of the land and beach area for indiscriminate public or private usage (such as a public park or public landing) were considered to be outside the scope and purpose of the company's interest.

Also, it was an objective of the company to sell the property within a reasonable length of time subject to restrictions consistent with the company's primary purposes, as defined above.

Although it was definitely not a prime objective of the company to make money on this venture, the group expected to make every effort within the limits of its objectives to minimize any loss to those who have a monetary interest in the company.

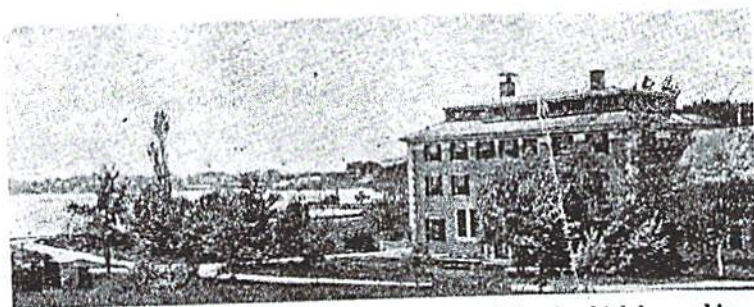
USED AS SCHOOL

The structure to be demolished was built after the original building, which housed the Powder Point School, burned on April 13, 1913. The school was rebuilt and continued as a preparatory school until it was acquired by Sailors Snug Harbor. Among its graduates was Alger Hiss, who was a classmate of Henry Hurd, formerly of Duxbury, and now a resident of the Cape.

The rebuilt structure was also used as a hotel in the summer. In recent years it housed part of the Duxbury kindergarten class.

Here is a brief history of the present structure:

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This faded photo of the original Powder Point School, which burned in 1913, appears to have been taken from Weston Rd.

A DUXBURY LAND MARK

Sailors' Snug Harbor, which was founded in 1852 to care for aged or indigent sailors of the U.S. Merchant Marine, occupied property in the Germantown section of Quincy until 1949, when the property was bought by the Quincy Housing Authority.

This caused the trustees to look for suitable housing for those who were then inmates of the Harbor, and an arrangement was entered into by which the Harbor inmates were taken care of at the National Sailors' Home in Duxbury.

One requirement for admission to the Harbor was service under the U.S. flag for at least 5 years. With the establishment of old age assistance, social security, pension benefits and other aids for the elderly and those incapacitated for further service, the applications for the Harbor decreased (as did those for the National Sailors' Home).

Therefore the trustees of the Harbor petitioned the Massachusetts Supreme Court for an enlargement of the definition of the term "sailor," and, under the decree which the Court granted, the Harbor could accept fishermen, whether these men have been employed on sea-going craft or were self employed.

After a few years of operating under the agreement with the National Sailors' Home, and after Court approval of the arrangements, the Sailors' Snug Harbor bought the property of the National Sailors' Home and operated it. The agreement provided for a limited number of admissions of men who would be eligible under the charter of the National Sailors' Home, but not that of the Sailors' Snug Harbor. The National Sailors' Home continued to function as a corporate entity.

For all practical purposes the only change that occurred was the transfer of ownership of the Powder Point property. There retired sailors from the Navy, the Merchant Marine and the fishing fleet continued to find a home and to receive the care that such a home could give.